

Cast of Characters

NARRATOR, a narrator.

LUPE, a girl who plays mad video games.

WARRIOR ONE, a great fighter. Exists in a video game.

WARRIOR TWO, also a great fighter. Also exists in a video game.

ANNOUNCER/CONDUCTOR, a fuzzy intercom voice.

MARTA ELENA, a tacky teenager. Hoop earrings.

THE F TRAIN MONSTER, a terrifying worm-creature that lives under subway tracks, straight-up *X-Files*-style.

Acknowledgments

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LUPE AND THE F TRAIN MONSTER

by Marco Ramirez

(LIGHTS UP. Two WARRIORS stand at opposite ends of the stage, fists up and ready to fight. They talk like a bad Kung-Fu movie.)

WARRIOR ONE. I will fight you with all my might.

WARRIOR TWO. Don't you know who I am?

WARRIOR ONE. Of course I do. You're the one I was born to battle.

WARRIOR TWO. Prepare to meet your doom, warrior.

(Cheesy electronic FIGHT MUSIC plays. WARRIOR ONE and TWO circle each other, slinging fists, throwing kicks in the air. Neither hits the other. Their motions are robotic, every punch looks like every other punch. Sometimes they kick twice consecutively, exactly the same—just like a video game. WARRIOR TWO lands one punch, then another. He/she seems to be winning. Matter of fact, he/she DOES win. WARRIOR ONE collapses on the floor. Lights change.)

ANNOUNCER. Gruesome...

LUPE. No!

(Suddenly, lights up on the inside of a train. LUPE plays a small electronic gaming device, something like a GameBoy or a DS or a PSP.)

ANNOUNCER. GAME... OVERRRRR...

(LUPE rips off her headphones, puts the game away.)

LUPE. Stupid game. I can never beat that guy. Twenty-three stops on the way home and I can never beat that *one* guy. Double-high-kick back-punch. Stupid trick.

TRAIN CONDUCTOR. This is the Crosstown F train. Goin' from Bedford to Naperville to Jokersmouth, transfer here to the E, P, 1, 2, Green, and Hookalacka Trains.

LUPE. Cheater. Stupid Double-high-kick back-punch cheater.

TRAIN CONDUCTOR. Stand clear of the closing doors.

(BING BONG. The train doors close. The train starts moving.)

NARRATOR. Lupe Delgado was eleven years old. Her mom worked nights. Most of the time, her mom also worked days. A kid like Lupe had to figure a lot of stuff out on her own. So Lupe rode the train by herself. A lot.

LUPE. (*Timid:*) A, A, B, B, down, down, left. That's how you gotta get 'im. A, A, B, B, down, down, left...

NARRATOR. Lupe was a smart kid, but she wasn't really good at anything.

LUPE. (*To NARRATOR:*) Rude.

NARRATOR. She never got a ribbon at The Science Fair, she never made top ten in The Spelling Bee, and she was always second-to-last to get picked for teams at kickball.

LUPE. And even then, the only reason I'm not *last* is Fernando de la Torres. He doesn't like kickball 'cause he says it ruins his sneakers.

TRAIN CONDUCTOR. This is the Crosstown F train, from Bedford to Naperville to Jagrammazhouse, transfer here to the P, R, T, I, 2, Green, and Mookashookawoowoo Trains.

NARRATOR. Lupe was a nice kid, a good kid, but Lupe had done *nothing* extraordinary her whole life.

LUPE. (*Defensive:*) I'm *eleven*, bro. And anyway, I could almost beat SuperDeathMatch 3 but I haven't beaten the last bad guy yet. What-
ever. Stop talking. Who are you anyway?

NARRATOR. I'm the narrator.

LUPE. You meet weird people on the subway.

NARRATOR. It's the middle of the night. It's been a regular Tuesday—but in ten seconds, something *extraordinary* is about to happen.

LUPE. Ten seconds?

NARRATOR. Now five—

LUPE. What you talkin' about "extraordin—

(—*SUDDENLY, the lights all shut out. The TRAIN STOPS. A HISS NOISE.*)

LUPE. What the heck!?? Narrator? Hello? What just happened? Why did we just stop—

TRAIN CONDUCTOR. —Pardon the delays, this is the F train, from Bedford to Jokersmouth to Izyaboybangs, we're experiencing technical difficulties, please stay seated—

LUPE. (*Standing:*) —But why did we—

TRAIN CONDUCTOR. (*Insisting:*) —PLEASE STAY SEATED!!!!

LUPE. —I could do that.

(*A mini-beat. LUPE gets bored, has an idea.*)

NARRATOR. And then Lupe realized there was something else she could do.

LUPE. I could beat my high score and beat that stupid Cheater-Face with the A, A, B, B, down, down, left.

(*The GAME TURNS ON. WARRIOR ONE AND TWO ARE BACK.*)

WARRIOR ONE. I will fight you with all my might.

WARRIOR TWO. Don't you know who I am?

WARRIOR ONE. Of course I do. You're the one I was born to battle.

WARRIOR TWO. Prepare to meet your doom, warrior.

LUPE. Come on! I can do this! A, A, B, B, down, down, left. A, A, B, B, down, down, left!

(*Cheesy electronic FIGHT MUSIC plays. WARRIOR ONE and TWO circle each other, slinging fists, throwing kicks in the air. Same as before—except WARRIOR ONE actually seems to be winning.*)

LUPE. YES! YES BRO! COME ON!

(*The electronic music starts to become a DRONING sound. WARRIOR ONE and WARRIOR TWO slow down.*)

LUPE. No no no—

(*WARRIOR ONE and TWO suddenly COLLAPSE.*)

ANNOUNCER. Battery... Looowww... GAME... OVVVveerrrrr...

LUPE. What? Come on... noooo...

NARRATOR. If you thought the extraordinary thing was that Lupe was gonna beat the videogame, you're wrong. This is much better than that.

LUPE. Better than THAT?! WHAT'S BETTER THAN THAT?! YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MANY TIMES I'VE—

(—*OFFSTAGE, A ROAR. A beat. LUPE looks off, worried, but tries to go back to her previous thought.*)

LUPE. YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MANY TIMES I'VE—

(—*OFFSTAGE, AGAIN, ANOTHER ROAR. In the dark, alone, scared, LUPE swallows hard.*)

NARRATOR. Lupe was from the city, so she knew exactly what that sound was. Her older cousin Marta Elena told her about it when she was six. You might not have been there—

(The F TRAIN MONSTER ENTERS. It's EXACTLY WHAT MARTA ELENA DESCRIBED. It's a terrifying worm-creature monster thing from The X-Files. It stares at LUPE. A beat.)

F TRAIN MONSTER. Don't you know who I am?

LUPE. *(Terrified:)* Naw. Naw, bro, you don't exist.

(The F TRAIN MONSTER is standing curiously close to where Warrior Two was.)

F TRAIN MONSTER. *(Insistent:)* Don't you know who I am?!!

LUPE. No, I need to leave, I need to hide, don't talk to strangers, especially not monster-strangers—

F TRAIN MONSTER. —That's NOT WHAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO SAY!!!

(A beat. LUPE thinks. She realizes she's standing where Warrior One was.)

F TRAIN MONSTER (WARRIOR TWO). *(Calmly:)* Don't you know who I am?

(A beat.)

LUPE (WARRIOR ONE). "Of course I do. You're the one I was born to battle"...?

F TRAIN MONSTER (WARRIOR TWO). Prepare to meet your doom, warrior.

(Cheesy electronic MUSIC PLAYS. LUPE can hear it.)

LUPE. What?!

(The F TRAIN MONSTER starts to stalk LUPE around the subway car. LUPE avoids it.)

LUPE. Agh!—

F TRAIN MONSTER. —Growlllllll—

LUPE. —I'm never gonna beat him though. I can't even beat the game. I didn't qualify for The Spelling Bee. I'm second-to-last at kickball!—

F TRAIN MONSTER. —GROWWWWWWLLL—

LUPE. —Somebody help me!—

NARRATOR. —And so this is the story of Lupe Delgado.

LUPE. Narrator what are you doing?—

F TRAIN MONSTER. —GROWL—

LUPE. —Don't talk about me like that, narrator, I'm right here!!—

NARRATOR. Lupe Delgado who was only eleven years old.

LUPE. Lupe Delgado who died on the subway 'cause the Narrator wouldn't help—

NARRATOR. —Her mom worked nights,—

LUPE. *(Frantic:)*—PLEASE!! —

NARRATOR. —And most of the time, her mom also worked days.

LUPE. *(Thinking out loud:)* A, A, B, B, down, down, left?

NARRATOR. So Lupe had to figure a lot of stuff out on her own.

LUPE. A, A, B, B, down, down, left!!

(LUPE stands up to the F TRAIN MONSTER.)

NARRATOR. Like this.

LUPE. A, A, B, B, down, down, left!!

(The F TRAIN MONSTER takes a slug to the face.)

LUPE. Down, down LEFT!

(And another one.)

F TRAIN MONSTER. NO!

LUPE. A... B... Double kick swirl-around. Low punch.

(As she says them, she does them, and she starts to win.)

F TRAIN MONSTER. NOooooooooooooo!

(A big finish.)

LUPE. A, A, B, B, down, down, double-down, WHAM!!

(A BIG SMASH. The F TRAIN MONSTER topples over and dies. A long beat.)

ANNOUNCER. Gruesome...

LUPE. Really?

ANNOUNCER. GAME...OVERRRRRR...

(LUPE stands over the F TRAIN MONSTER, proud, in shock.)

LUPE. I did it?... Me?

TRAIN CONDUCTOR. This is the Crosstown F train, from Bedford to Naperville, transfer here to the E, R, T, 1, 2, Green, and Splunka-dunk Trains.

LUPE. I did it.

NARRATOR. Lupe had done NOTHING extraordinary her whole life.

LUPE. *(Excited.)* I rule.

NARRATOR. Until tonight.

(LUPE stands proud. For the first time in her whole life—she wins.)

LUPE. ...I rule.

(LIGHTS OUT.)

End of Play

PORCH REVIVAL

by Mark Rigney